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SUMMARY

This study focuses on the daily life experience in Tibetan Buddhist monasteries for women in the remote parts of the Northern Himalayas of India. The living conditions in these remote mountain regions are harsh with food and drinking water often in short supply, severe climate challenges and educational and medical facilities lacking. Although the educational opportunities for girls in these hardship areas are improving, religious education is still mostly considered irrelevant by the family and the government schools do not facilitate the study of Tibetan Buddhist. Reinforced by the perceived gender inequality in Tibetan Buddhism, organized religious education for lay-women and nuns was almost non-existent. With the growing interest of Buddhism in the West since the 1960s, and Western women turning to Tibetan Buddhism, adversity to this position for Tibetan Buddhist women grew strong. Since the middle of the 1980s, Western women have started to address these problems.

The Jamyang Foundation, founded by Venerable Karma Lekshe Tsomo, an American nun and Professor of Religious Studies at the University of San Diego, in Dharamsala, India in 1987 established several monasteries with educational projects for Buddhist women in the remote corners of the Indian Himalayan areas. By providing a chance to live the desired monastic lifestyle and enjoy education, Jamyang Foundation hopes to contribute to the empowerment and changing perceptions of women's potential throughout the Himalayas. Much effort and money has been spent on both sides, however, an in-depth analysis of impact of this global support has not been made up until now. This study discusses the support, the process and its impact on the daily lives of the nuns in the monasteries. By applying a combination of engaged scholarship methods and spending long periods of time with the nuns, an important part of this study was undertaken in collaboration with the nuns, working with them in an equal partnership as much as was possible in an accountable, methodological manner. The vast amount of data collected had all the elements in it to explore the actors as well as the necessary context, content and process of change through time. To analyze the details of the everyday life of the nuns creating their own monastic home, to view the whole of the monastic organization, its inhabitants, stakeholders and processes surrounding it into theoretical perspective, I build an integrated, inclusive frame of theories. Appadurai's concept of scapes and work of the imagination (1996) and Bauman's concept of liquidity and individualization (2000) provide a grip on the intense velocity of the movements of the global and local forces in the landscape of the nuns. Zooming in on the movements of the nuns and their community, creating their own space within the organized place of the monastery, De Certeau's theory on the duality of place and space through strategies and tactics (1984) provides clarification to these encroaching movements. Zooming out and framing the nuns as actors within the religious field of the monastery, outlining the interplay of nuns, their benefactors and locality through applying Bourdieu's concepts of

field and capital (1977) reveals the significant institutions and relevant stakeholders in the nuns' daily lives. With this wider framing of the nuns as agents, identifying their use of resources through Bourdieu's various forms of capital gives insight in how the nuns ensue in the global-local nexus. An analysis of the practice of the nuns through this framework shows the way in which the nuns transform and operate the communal monastic structure by their daily experience to a livable personal space.

Analysis of the nuns' daily practice shows that aided by Jamyang Foundation's global strategy, the nuns disembedded from their family and re-embedded within their co-created monastery in various ways. With several global and local parties in and surrounding the monastery all playing out their strategies to gain territory, thereby creating the monastery as a site of conflict. Meeting these conflicts with an array of tactics, the nuns shape and maintain their position in the monastery. Depending on their degree of embeddedness in the locality, the variety of locality and the age group, the nuns appropriate and convert the global resources to the local flavor in order to adjust to the conflicts surrounding their monastic lifestyle. The results of the nuns' actions vary accordingly to the local available resources and the rigidity of the ruling customs and traditions. The stability of the monastery as a social space is anchored in the tactics of the nuns. Constantly subject to the movements of conversion of resources and negotiation between the parties involved, the social space of the monastery is based on the ever changing equilibrium between space and time. Fuelled by the imagination of what is within reach, the nuns are collectively shaping their social space in their daily practice. It is this collective element within the nuns' daily practice, their communal effort and dedication that brings the apparent necessary stability in their social space.

With this comparative study on the monasteries for women in a specific area and geographically confined, globalization emerges as a flowing process, multidimensional and interactive, always on the move following different tracks and landing on different local grounds. Absorbed in diverse localities in different ways, the global resurfaces in distinct manifestations through appropriation and transformation by the individuals and the localities it touches. This study shows the indigenization – the transformation, or changing of the global to suite the local culture, thereby adding to the hybridization view of globalization. This study also shows that the global is used as a resource to create, maintain and expand the space of individuals and communities. Encountering the local, the global causes friction and conflicts. In an attempt to deal with these conflicts, the individual and community make the global their own, appropriating and converting the global to local resources to maintain and strengthen their position.

Practically this study contributes to the facilitation of future projects of support by global benefactors by providing a better understanding of the ways the local beneficiaries are able to integrate and transform the global support offered. This study shows that global resources need to be appropriated and converted to the specific locality. Knowledge of the local is key and it is the local recipients who pos-

sess the most knowledge and experience with conversion of resources and the local society. The global benefactors need to recognize the inevitability of the local flavor and act upon this knowledge with confidence in the local recipients in order to align the shared vision with support offered and needs experienced.

Summary